



**BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS**

**Meeting Minutes**

November 1, 2024

In attendance: Deborah Swenson, Chair (UCD), Dave Volz, Vice Chair (UCR), Anant Sahai (UCB), Tony Albano (UCD), Yuri Shirman (UCI), Aaron Burke (UCLA Alternate) (videoconference), Joel Spencer (UCM Alternate), Sundar Venkatadriagaram (UCR) (videoconference), Daniel Sievenpiper (UCSD), Michael Stryker (UCSF), Vanessa Woods (UCSB), George Bulman (UCSC), Jeremy Vargas (Undergraduate Student Representative), Bethany Padron (Graduate Student Representative), Abby Whitbeck (Vice President, Advanced Placement Strategy, College Board) (videoconference), Ana Menezes (Senior Vice President, Learning and Assessment, College Board) (videoconference), Katherine Newman (Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, UCOP) (videoconference), Liz Yap (Principal Senior Counsel, UC Legal), Gary Clark (Associate Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management, UCLA) (videoconference), Steven W. Cheung (Chair, Academic Senate), Ahmet Palazoglu (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Han Mi Yoon-Wu (Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs (GUEA)), Chase Fischerhall (Director, A-G and Transfer Articulation Policy, GUEA), Angelica Moore (Director, Undergraduate Admission Policy and Communications, GUEA), Liz Terry (Manager of Admissions Analytics, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA), Matt Reed (Senior Institutional Research and Planning Analyst, Institutional Research and Academic Planning) (videoconference), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst)

**I. Consent Calendar**

**Action:** Today's agenda items and their priority were approved.

**Action:** The October 4, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

**II. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership**

*Steven W. Cheung, Chair and Ahmet Palazoglu, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

UC's mortgage origination program ran out of funds, but the Office of the President (UCOP) is aiming to provide \$100M to the program in January 2025. The Academic Advisory Committee has submitted a set of desirable characteristics for the next president to the special Regents committee that will make the selection. Searches are underway for a vice provost for academic affairs and programs at UCOP as well as for new chancellors for UCSB and UCR. Chair Cheung attended the provost's recent congress on Hispanic Serving Institutions and learned that Latinx high school students are the fastest growing segment of high school students. The systemwide workgroups on the academic calendar, artificial intelligence (AI), and faculty conduct policies in the Academic Personnel Manual are each underway. The California State University (CSU) system will offer doctoral program degrees and staff at UCOP are working with the CSU Chancellor's Office to design a process for reviewing the proposed programs to ensure they are not duplicative of UC's. Information from the Senate's faculty survey and from the upcoming total remuneration study will eventually be shared by Chair Cheung with the Regents.

### III. Chair's Announcements

*Deborah Swenson, BOARS Chair*

The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) discussed the CSU's plan to offer doctoral degrees and UC's systemwide Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs will be closely involved with determining whether the CSU proposals overlap with UC programs. Another topic ICAS discussed was credit for prior learning (CPL), such as military service or workforce experience. The CSUs award credit for competency-based education. Next, Chair Swenson described the California Assembly Higher Education Committee and Education Committee joint oversight hearing on October 10th. Chair Swenson and Associate Vice Provost Yoon-Wu prepared in advance to address questions about Area C implementation. Swenson also noted that she shared information in the hearing describing how the Area C work group's deliberations lead to recommendations that were centered on the best form of preparation for California high school students who are interested in studying at a campus in the UC system. Swenson emphasized that this recommendation for course preparation is useful for students who decide at a later date following their high school graduation, that they want to transfer to UC, given AB 1705 rules which dramatically limit California Community College math offerings of Algebra II (Math III) courses, for students who did not complete this coursework during high school. Swenson argued that UC should do a better job of conveying that UC faculty BOARS decisions are motivated by a concern for students. In this case, the policy clarification was grounded in an interest with providing students with the greatest opportunities for success not only in admissions but in college graduation.

**Discussion:** A member advocated for the Area C Workgroup should actively monitor the implementation of its recommendations to show that faculty are paying close attention. Another member shared their personal awareness of community college students decide to choose Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) path after their high school graduation, due to the lack of bridge courses they require for transfer, due to the new 1705 policy. If clarity on the Algebra II/Math III standard causes more students to complete these courses during high school, it will mitigate the lack of these course offerings in the CCC system. Finally, other members expressed the view that further attention might also be directed to thinking about ways to increase formal consultation with the K-12 segment beyond the long-established ties provided by UCOP staff.

### IV. (Systemwide Review) Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479

The proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479 are designed to facilitate implementation of associate degrees for transfer (ADTs) at UC. ADTs are generally limited to 60 semester credits. While this cap is expanded to 66 semester credit units for some STEM disciplines it is difficult to remain under this cap while completing the preparatory STEM courses for transfer as well as the general education (GE) requirements that are included as part of an ADT degree. To ensure that students with ADTs in STEM majors are adequately prepared to transfer to UC STEM majors the Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI) recommended that students be allowed to take up to four GE courses after transferring to UC. This flexibility allows these students to more fully prepare for their UC STEM major. It also aligns the transfer student experience with that of students who go directly to UC as first-year students, as there is no UC requirement for UC students to complete their GE requirements during their first two years of study. ACSCOTI's second recommendation is to permit students to complete the Cal-GETC science requirements with two courses in different science disciplines, while relaxing the

constraint that one course is in the life sciences while the other is in the physical sciences.

**Discussion:** Members reported that their admissions committees favor creating flexibility for transfer students in support of their success. The language about the Subject Area 5 courses should be more specific to make clear that a student can take a course in physical science and a course in biological science. A potential downside is that some courses students take to prepare for the major might not articulate as expected to a specific UC program. Some courses needed to prepare for a major that should be taken the first year may not be available at a community college.

**Action:** Chair Swenson will draft a memo indicating that the undergraduate campuses are in favor of the proposal.

## **V. UC Eligibility Areas Proposal**

Members were asked to share feedback from their committees on the UC Eligibility Areas proposal.

**Discussion:** UCI's committee agreed that the articulation requirements should be publicly available and prefers the third option for the short term. The UCSB committee opined that use of the first option could risk lowering the math requirements for transfer students to a level that would be below those expected of first year students. After some back and forth on option three, this committee decided that option two is the practical approach and will keep UC in the conversation. UCLA's committee is in favor of option three. The admission committee at UCR considered the need to do what is best for students and their preparation, the legislative pressures on UC, as well as which policy will be the most straightforward to implement. They viewed option three as the easiest while they viewed option one as ceding too much control. For this reason, the UCR committee landed on option two with a request for more information about the complexities around operationalizing this approach. Everyone on the UCSC committee agreed that the Eligibility Area criteria should be transparent to help California Community College faculty as they design their classes and to provide CCC students with clear information about the courses that will count for the seven-course pattern. To move this forward, the UCSC committee asked to view more examples of courses that meet California General Education Transfer Curriculum but not the seven-course pattern and vice versa to understand the extent of the differences. As a general consensus in favor of option two emerged, faculty expressed particular concern about maintaining standards for math preparation that will support all students.

## **VI. Advanced Placement (AP) Scoring Verification**

*Abby Whitbeck, Vice President, AP Strategy & Ana Menezes, Senior Vice President, Learning & Assessment, College Board*

College Board representatives joined BOARS to explain changes to their system used to score a subset of Advanced Placement exams. Vice President Whitbeck shared that almost 40% of California high school graduates take AP while in high school, a number that increases every year, and across the country 35% of graduates take AP. In California, over 60% of students who take AP are Black, Hispanic, Native American, low income, or a combination of those. College Board also shared research showing that a high AP score increases the probability that a student will declare a major in that same subject in college.

AP exams include multiple choice and free response. Section scores are weighted and there is a composite score from five to one. The College Board has utilized standard setting panels comprised of eight to 18 higher education faculty and high school educators to determine cut scores. These panels have largely resulted in success rates of about 60-80% for most courses, but argued that inconsistencies in pass rates led the College Board to adopt a new methodology. College Board developed a new approach they call evidence-based standard setting (EBSS). They applied this new EBSS process to nine AP courses starting in 2022: biology; English literature; world history; chemistry; macroeconomics; microeconomics; European history; U.S. government; and U.S. history. Prior to this change, the pass rates in these nine courses before EBSS ranged from 44%-59%. Afterwards, the new pass rates range from 64%-76%.

**Discussion:** Chair Swenson explained that UC's admissions process involves looking at how students performed in AP courses and exams and in some cases they can be used to fulfill required college courses. UC faculty have long felt that there was an absolute standard in terms of knowing that a score of four or five is adequate for placing out of a prerequisite. Therefore, it is concerning that the College Board did not notify UC about their plans to modify the scoring system. The College Board's method relies heavily on impact data, whereas faculty are incorporating more data on the relationships between AP scores, student experience, and future performance. Asked how the College Board's method balances normative versus criterion, Senior Vice President Menezes indicated that the digital library of AP courses and exams is the first time there has been coherent units, topics, and learning objectives for each course that could be tagged to each exam question to generate metadata on the specific skills and knowledge students demonstrate on the exam. The College Board looks at the impact data alongside the actual content and skills that students should be demonstrating on an exam and is confident about differentiating between a student who can earn a three, four, or five. It was noted that the College Board is utilizing data on students whose PSAT scores are not comparable to those of UC students which makes it unclear how the generic college-level introductory course standard applies to selective universities. Senior Vice President Menezes agreed to provide the committee with a technical report.

Chair Swenson reiterated that it would be valuable for BOARS to see the technical details about the students and the College Board's unilateral decision to change its scoring system. Information of this sort would include the colleges the students in their study are attending, and the grade inflation at those colleges. Absent this information, Chair Swenson remarked that multiple factors make it difficult to know what the study is saying, as it may be showing information about students who are attending institutions that are very different from UC. To the extent that the College Board is changing its grading standards, Swenson and BOARS argued that UC needs significantly more information and communication from the College Board about its unilaterally decided scoring changes. Absent this information, students' AP scores may become a less-trusted component of admissions. BOARS would especially like to see data on students attending selective institutions. The decision to waive a course based on an AP score are made by faculty at the academic program level and if the College Board is not sufficiently transparent, faculty are likely to require scores of four or five. Vice President Whitbeck indicated that the College Board can partner with UC to look at the performance of UC students exclusively.

## **VII. Executive Session: Consultation with UC Legal**

*Note: Other than action items, minutes are not taken during executive session.*

## **VIII. Presentation on Holistic Review at UCLA**

*Gary Clark, Associate Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management, UCLA*

Chair Swenson arranged for Associate Vice Chancellor Clark to provide an overview of holistic admissions so members will understand the information available to readers for scoring applications. Although campuses take slightly different approaches and have a variety of constraints that inform their decisions, there are commonalities in how the admissions directors approach this task. This presentation may help reduce speculation about how readers either do or do not evaluate applications as well as inform the decisions made by BOARS. Last year, UCLA received just under 146k first year applications and every first-year application is read at least twice before a decision is made. Applications are assigned randomly, not by territory, and there are over 320 readers who are admissions office staff along with current and retired high school counselors, and everyone receives the same annual rigorous training. One application is completed for all nine undergraduate campuses and UCOP forwards it to the campuses to which the student has applied.

Students select four of eight personal insight questions (PIQs) to answer and this is the only opportunity to hear the students' voice in the application process since they are not interviewed. The responses can add more detail to information elsewhere in the application or provide new information and these responses can impact how readers see a student as an overall candidate for admission.

**Discussion:** Chair Swenson thanked the associate vice chancellor for the presentation and remarked that the quality controls in place for application reviews are impressive. Asked about the accuracy of students' reports regarding the amount of time they spend on extracurricular activities, the associate vice chancellor commented that students are over-programmed and involved in a plethora of activities. Each year, UCOP checks random applications to verify what students report and reviews PIQ responses to see how they compare to other responses in the same or previous admission cycles. Students sign an affidavit at the end of the application indicating that the information they have shared is true. Admissions staff have started talking to readers about responses to the PIQs being written with the help of AI and emphasizes that the focus is on content rather than style. Students are encouraged to be authentic and write in their own words. A student who uses AI will get a polished statement that lacks substance and is not organic. It was noted that privileged students have always been able to get help with editing or guidance, so AI may enable a broader group of students to receive assistance. There is a concern about using AI detection tools due to the possibility of false positives.

Associate Vice Provost Yoon-Wu explained that if students who signed the affidavit are found to have been less than truthful on the application their admission is rescinded and this does occur every year. High school students and counselors are aware of UC's pre-admission verification process and knowing that admission can be rescinded acts as a deterrent. The application review process at UCLA for transfer students is very major specific since there are specific prerequisites associated with each major and selection is based largely on academic performance in courses for that major.

## **IX. Member Reports/Campus Updates**

UCSC: The admissions committee continues to look at the relationship between admissions and capacity in departments and divisions.

UCSD: The committee has discussed the proposed revisions to SR 479, the impact of AI on admissions, and the prospect for a satellite campus in Chula Vista.

UCB: The admissions committee will form four subcommittees to examine specific issues including: how to use the secondary major in admissions decisions; increasing demand by first year students for direct admit into majors; what is happening at the college level in light of the standardized testing policy; and what is happening with student athletes.

UCD: This committee discussed the Eligibility Areas proposal; what bringing back alternate majors would look like; whether acceptance rates by major should be published in the interest of transparency and reporting; restricting major changes and transparency regarding how switching majors works; and if standardized testing should be on future agendas.

UCSB: The admissions office presented on transfer students to inform the committee's discussions about SR 479. The committee is interested in looking at what happens once students are on campus and there will be a presentation from the major support services office.

UCR: The committee discussed the Eligibility Areas proposal and the proposed revisions to SR 479.

UCLA: The committee met with Associate Vice Chancellor Clark. The committee discussed the associate degree for transfer pilot at UCLA and the possibility of expanding the majors for the pilot.

## **X. Consultation with Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs Newman**

Chair Swenson explained that Provost Newman was invited to the meeting to discuss if there should be a reevaluation of what is essential for admission to UC and how BOARS can be effective in an environment where UC has many partners. Provost Newman shared that the president of the State Board of Education, Linda Darling Hammond, has asked if the A to G framework is still working as intended since it has been in place for decades. Provost Newman suggested the relevance of reexamining existing practices given significant changes in labor market demands and changes in the State's demographic composition. While the provost did point to particular changes, she suggested the potential value of a multi-year study.

The provost expressed support for the committee having the capacity to deliberate privately and confidentially and to minimize intrusion, even if the nature of the conclusions reached take a public form. Chair Swenson commented on how important it is for the members of BOARS to be able to freely express their opinions in a confidential setting and noted that anything that will become policy is eventually made public. For BOARS and the Academic Senate to operate the way it does would make it difficult to introduce public comment and faculty might hesitate to serve if meetings move in that direction. It would be useful if the provost would help counteract the narrative that BOARS is privately making decisions that will impact millions of students.

**XI. Consultation with Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs (GUEA) with Campus Admissions Directors and Enrollment Management Leads**

*Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA; Angelica Moore, Director, Undergraduate Policy & Communications, GUEA; Liz Terry, Senior Policy & Research Specialist, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA; & Matt Reed, Senior Institutional Research & Planning Analyst, Institutional Research & Academic Planning*

BOARS was joined by campus admissions directors and enrollment management leads to discuss various issues.

**Question:** *Should UC consider second/alternate majors?*

**Discussion:** The admissions directors and enrollment management leads reported varying uses of alternate majors on their campuses for first year and transfer students. Admitting students into alternate majors is used to meet enrollment targets and capacity is a key factor. There are questions about how many students accept the alternate major and one issue is students who enroll in the alternate major with the intention of switching to their first choice. UCB has not determined if alternate majors will be utilized for first year students while UCSB publicizes how alternate majors work so potential students have this information up front. The CSU system recently announced it will focus on career outcomes instead of graduation outcomes and there should be an effort to educate students well before they are at UC about the disparate majors students can pursue to go into a particular career. There are plenty of majors that students can freely switch between and this should be preserved as much as possible.

**Question:** *What could be done to make transfer easier for students? Are there pathways that would help to comply with regulations and legislation?*

**Discussion:** It would be beneficial to help students understand how the courses they have taken relate to the major to which they have applied. This information is in ASSIST but requires significant research so this should be automated, and numerous silos where the information resides should be connected. Chair Swenson observed that legislation has reduced the ability for CCC students to take the math courses needed for transfer and this raises questions about ensuring students are taking the courses that will prepare them to succeed at UC. In the past few years, CCC students have started taking courses at multiple CCC campuses including from different districts, and some thought should be given to guiding students toward the best pathway for transferring to UC. The surge in online courses during the pandemic may have contributed to this new behavior among students. It was noted that articulation agreements might be negated when students split a series by taking courses at multiple CCCs. UC does not get enough credit for what it has done to improve the transfer process with efforts like the transfer pathways for the most popular majors and for the high persistence, retention, and graduate rates for transfer students. Easing the path to transfer will take significant overhauls like common course numbering across all the CCCs or correcting the articulation problems within and across CCC districts, and UC should offer new majors that are viable pathways for first year and transfer students alike.

**Question:** *Are there trends or challenges related to the majors first year and transfer students are pursuing that inform how admissions are considered?*

**Discussion:** Campuses are seeing an increased number of first year students applying with college credit which might be a result of CCCs encouraging dual enrollment. However, there are questions about whether students are being advised that college level coursework will be on their transcripts forever and can impact their eligibility status to receive financial aid. There are also concerns about high school students' well-being and mental health when they are taking college courses and involved in so many extracurricular activities.

**Question:** *How can UC preserve academics when the information about students is distorted by significant grade inflation?*

**Discussion:** In addition to grade inflation, learning loss from the pandemic means that students in K-12 are behind their grade level and are in schools that lack the resources to help them catch up. It will be important to look at grade inflation in the context of the high school. Admissions staff noted that they are addressing this concern by looking for trends in student academics and course taking decisions.

The meeting adjourned at: 4:00 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams, Principal Policy Analyst

Attest: Deborah Swenson, Chair